

Measuring My Critical Thinking

For each question, select the answer that best describes you.

1. When I analyze information, data (facts and figures), or ideas, either at work or in class...	
(a)	Generally, I can report what I have read or heard with only a few mistakes. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ When there are reading comprehension questions, I usually get most of them right.▪ When a friend gives me directions to her house, I can find it without getting lost.
(b)	I can figure out how to use data and ideas to solve problems or complete assignments that are similar to examples I have seen. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ When I see the examples in the textbook, I understand how to do the homework.▪ After we studied the Renaissance in humanities, I could pick out a Renaissance painting.
(c)	I often copy the work of others and still may make mistakes. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ I like it when the teacher gives me a copy of the notes because mine don't make much sense.▪ I try to work problems the way they are done in the book, but sometimes I get the wrong answer.
(d)	I can provide in-depth analysis of the data or ideas that I use to solve problems or complete assignments. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ At work I take calls all day long. I can interpret, research, and respond to any question about my area.▪ Once I determine how to solve a problem, I can help other students understand how to solve it.
2. When I try to apply formulas, procedures, principles, or themes to a new problem, assignment, or situation...	
(a)	I have trouble thinking of the right formula or concept to use. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ I never remember which formula to use without someone reminding me.▪ When my boss asked me how the new deep fryer worked, all I could say was "good."
(b)	I can use formulas or concepts accurately to solve new problems or new situations. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ I was given a new assignment at work. Although I was unfamiliar with the paperwork, I figured out how to complete it correctly. I even made suggestions for improving the forms.▪ If I see a question or a formula, I first decode the information contained in the question or formula and then I know how to use it.
(c)	I can use the right formula or concept accurately—if the situation or problem is familiar. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ I can usually pick the right formula or concept if the problem isn't too complex, like figuring out what to do on a vacation each day.▪ If I see a right triangle, I will remember which formulas apply.
(d)	Usually, I can think of the right formula or concept, but I often have trouble using it correctly. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ When I listen to a politician speaking, I have trouble deciding if she is a Democrat or a Republican.▪ I may choose the right formula or concept, but because I don't have faith in my thinking, I will question whether I am right.
3. When I try to think about a subject, problem, or situation from more than one point of view...	
(a)	I can see two sides of any issue, but tend to think one of them is right. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ I can usually see where the other person is coming from, but like to think I'm right.▪ My boyfriend and I split up because he wanted a break. I understand, but I don't think he is right.

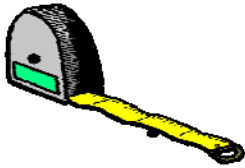
(b)	Most of the time, I can think of only one way to see it. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My science teacher says that I need to be open-minded, but I can't see why. I don't like it when someone shows me more than one way to do something.
(c)	I can see the value in viewing things from many points of view. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When my Mom gets mad at me, I put myself in her shoes so that I can understand why she is mad. I can argue multiple points of view or play devil's advocate, even if I feel strongly about an issue, because looking at something from many points of view builds mature convictions and opinions.
(d)	I can see most issues from multiple points of view. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When my friends debate, I can see both sides of the issue. Writing my persuasive essay in ENC 1101 was difficult because I had to choose one side when I saw both sides of the issue.

4. When I try to come to a conclusion about something I am thinking...

(a)	I can create a conclusion that is logical and that reflects my ideas, too. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In one of my classes, I analyzed different theories about what stimulates innovation and developed my own theory of why innovation occurs. After seeing the other team's presentation, I was able to add my thoughts to theirs to create a joint proposal we could all agree on.
(b)	My conclusion matches the evidence that has been presented. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Laci Peterson investigation, I made my conclusion about Scott Peterson's guilt based on the evidence I saw and read about. When I write papers in American government, I am careful that my conclusions are based on the information I included in my paper.
(c)	I can comfortably restate what has been said. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When I give a speech on something like alcohol addiction, I can add a quick recap for my conclusion. I am usually more comfortable saying what has been said than coming up with my own conclusions.
(d)	I have trouble thinking of anything to say. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have problems with conclusions, especially when writing papers. I had trouble explaining to my group what I was going to say in my speech.

5. When I try to pull ideas together to get the big picture...

(a)	I can arrange the ideas into a pattern that includes clear relationships among ideas. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With my friends, I always I arrange the stuff we all want to do and then we do it. I like to watch CSI, where I watch for the little clues that tell me who the murderer was.
(b)	I can arrange most ideas into a pattern, if it's not too complicated. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can pull together various ideas when trying to get the big picture. I can learn a new dance routine if it doesn't have too many steps.
(c)	I often see the pieces better than the big picture. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes it's easier and less complicated to go piece by piece. I am a here-and-now thinker. I usually don't think about the big picture.
(d)	I can link ideas together in complicated patterns and explain complex relationships. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before the War in Iraq, I predicted what might happen if we invade a country that never attacked us. I can explain the differences between breast and prostate cancer.



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Add up the total for your answers:

1(a) = 2	2(a) = 1	3(a) = 2	4(a) = 4	5(a) = 3
1(b) = 3	2(b) = 4	3(b) = 1	4(b) = 3	5(b) = 2
1(c) = 1	2(c) = 2	3(c) = 4	4(c) = 2	5(c) = 1
1(d) = 4	2(d) = 3	3(d) = 3	4(d) = 1	5(d) = 4

If you scored from 1-5, you are probably just beginning to think critically. While many Valencia students begin here, you can expand your critical thinking abilities by becoming actively involved in classroom assignments and extracurricular activities.

A **BEGINNING** critical thinker:

- Relies on copying the work of others, sometimes inaccurately, to solve problems or complete assignments
- Has trouble thinking of the right formula or concept to use
- Sees issues from only one side
- Has difficulty forming a conclusion
- Sees the pieces better than the big picture

If you scored from 6-10, you have developed some critical thinking skills. You can expand your critical thinking abilities by challenging yourself to take on more difficult courses and extracurricular experiences that will expand your thinking.

A **DEVELOPING** critical thinker:

- Reports what s/he has read or heard when solving a problem or completing an assignment
- Thinks of the right formula or concept, but has trouble using it correctly
- Sees two sides of an issue, but knows which one is right
- Forms a conclusion by restating what has been said
- Arranges ideas into a simple pattern

If you scored from 11-15, you are probably pretty good at critical thinking, but you shouldn't rest there. Seek out courses and extracurricular projects that will help you refine your critical thinking abilities and develop your leadership skills.

A **COMPETENT** critical thinker:

- Figures out how to use data and ideas to solve problems or complete assignments that are similar to familiar examples
- Uses the right formula or concept accurately if the situation or problem is familiar
- Sees most issues from multiple points of view
- Makes conclusions that match the evidence presented
- Arranges ideas into clear patterns

If you scored from 16-20, you are probably very adept at critical thinking. You have learned that critical thinking is one of the most valuable skills in any profession or situation and—like anything—when you can do it well, it's just plain fun! You'll be excited to know that your critical thinking skills continue expanding throughout your lifetime.

An **ACCOMPLISHED** critical thinker:

- Provides in-depth analysis of data or ideas used to solve problems or complete assignments
- Uses formulas or concepts accurately to solve new problems or assignments
- Sees the value in viewing things from multiple points of view
- Creates conclusions that are logical, unique and personal
- Links ideas together in complicated patterns and explains complex relationships